

Introducing the Vermont Early Learning Standards: A Guide for Presenters

A few words:

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a trainer for “Introducing the Vermont Early Learning Standards.” This is an exciting moment in early childhood education and we are pleased to have knowledgeable and experienced professionals such as you involved in bringing this information to the field. We firmly believe it is a win-win situation for everyone as professionals, children, and parents will benefit from consistent and developmentally-based expectations.

We are convinced that simply handing out the standards or providing a fleeting introduction will be of little value and have minimal effect. To properly introduce VELs to others, at least 2 ½ hours should be set aside. This will permit participants to thoroughly examine the materials, gain some experience in applying the standards, and have their questions answered. This is not a course in curriculum development or assessment; rather, it shows how VELs can be an integral component that can be woven into those skill areas.

To assist you in presenting the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELs) to others, materials have been prepared for your use. This will make your job easier and provide greater consistency throughout the sessions held across the state. Included in this guide you will find:

- Materials Checklist
- Presenter’s Guide with activities
- Support materials (hand-out masters, transparencies, video clip, disk)
- ***Vermont Early Learning Standards***

Obviously, you are free to adapt the materials or add other activities in your presentations.

Effective staff development is an art. Simply providing a person with this guide will not guarantee a presenter’s confidence or effectiveness. For this reason, we encourage you to initially organize and conduct training sessions in teams. The participants will appreciate differing perspectives and experiences and it will make your job easier. Also, realize that the participants have a great deal to offer as the information is presented. Capitalize on their knowledge and experience. Finally, have FUN!

Work with others in teams Materials Checklist

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Before the session

- ___ overhead projector and screen
- ___ flipchart and markers
- ___ video with monitor
- ___ video clips for presentation
- ___ presenter's outline
- ___ overhead transparencies
- ___ sample of children's work
- ___ registration sign-up sheet
- ___ nametags (optional)

For participants:

- ___ copies of agenda
- ___ pre and post surveys (two per person)
- ___ one copy of VELS per participant
- ___ blank cartoon sheets
- ___ scavenger hunt sheets
- ___ Northern Lights brochures
- ___ IPDP documentation forms

Room design: adult tables with 6-8 chairs at each, presenter's table with video, overhead projector and flipchart in front of room

After the session

- ___ Sign-up sheet w/ participants' information
- ___ Pre- and Post-tests
- ___ Evaluation results (tabulated summary based upon your current workshop evaluation form)

Within one week of the training, send above items to:

Jim Squires, Early Childhood Programs Coordinator
Vermont Dept. of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620
802.828.3892

Introducing the Vermont Early Learning Standards: A Guide for Presenters

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- I. Welcome and Introductions :05**

- II. Testing for Knowledge and Beliefs :15**
 - a. Administer **& collect** survey
 - b. “Line Dance” based upon questions in survey- **OVERHEAD**
 - 1. Having early learning standards is a good thing for children.
 - 2. Standards-based curriculum is rigid and lessens opportunities for play.
 - 3. There is strong agreement on what children should know and do when they enter kindergarten.
 - 4. Parents will love VELs.
 - 5. Standards means we are moving toward the standardization of what and how we teach.

- III. Goals for the Session - OVERHEAD :05**
 - a. Become familiar with VELs, its language, and contents
 - b. Understand how to use VELs when designing curriculum
 - c. Use VELs as a means to select assessment tools/procedures
 - d. Support parent conferences on children’s development using VELs

- IV. Standards and Early Childhood :15**
 - a. *National standards movement across business and education*
 - b. *Vermont standards*
 - 1. Program/ professional standards
 - use props (VFSLO, HS Performance Standards, NAEYC accreditation booklet, etc.)
 - 2. Performance standards- *what children can know, do, behave*
 - a. Vermont early educators react cautiously to Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities for PreK-Grade 12
 - b. Early educators wanted something more appropriate

c. *Developing VELs*

1. Survey of national standards and guidelines
2. Repeated feedback loops from field
 - over 100 early educators and administrators from Head Start, child care, public schools, Parent Child Centers, colleges and universities, faith-based programs, health providers, parents
3. Adoption by Early Childhood Steering Committee
4. National review by Georgetown University
 - received “A” rating for research base in literacy and math

V. Advantages & Considerations of VELs

:20

a. * *ask group to brainstorm advantages and considerations*

- share comments & write on

b. *Advantages*

- consistency across settings
- developmentally appropriate expectations
- common language
- research-based
- guides curriculum development and choice of assessment instruments/procedures
- provides basis for suggesting referrals
- standards does not mean standardization of early childhood programming
- validates contributions of quality early childhood programs

c. *Considerations*

- lose sight of individual child
- “one size fits all” approach to early childhood
- children with special needs held to same expectations
- VELs will become an assessment
- VELs will be a gatekeeper to kindergarten

d. *Should and Should Not’s of Using VELs*

- **OVERHEAD**
- Ask group to identify others

<i>HAND OUT COPIES OF VELs NOW</i>

VI. Guiding Principles :10

- a. Turn to page in VELS
- b. *Pair with another to share* the one that you think is really critical.
- c. *Principles form the foundation/ guiding light for using standards.*
 - indications of what we value

VII. How To Read VELS :20

- a. *Group turns to page 6/7 – show OVERHEAD*
- b. *Discuss parts*
 - Domain
 - Outcomes
 - Goals & Definitions
 - Examples (not an exhaustive list!)
 - Adults/Environment Support
 -
- c. *Activities (choose among options)*
 - 1. Scavenger Hunt (Hand-out)
 - 2. Bubbles cartoon fill-in
 - 3. Explore a domain in detail
 - small groups look at one or two different domains
- d. *A word about Play*
 - Contained in every domain
 - Cartoon at end of document

VIII. Helping Others to Apply VELS to Their Work :30

- a. **OVERHEAD**
 - Guide your observation
 - Assist in selecting a strong and appropriate assessment tool and procedure
 - Inform your curriculum
 - Other ways
- b. **Observing the Standards – VIDEO/Work Samples**
 - assign small groups to observe for one or two domains
 - show short video clip or use samples of children's work
 - discuss in small groups/ ask if any group found no evidence (OK if not observed)

- c. **Standards-Based or Standards-Linked Curriculum Design**
- Part B (Observing the Standards) is an example of standards-linked curriculum design/assessment
 - **OVERHEAD**
 - a. Standards-Based= Developing curriculum knowing what you want to the children to gain (intentional)
 - b. Standards-Linked= After-the-fact association to see what children have gained (incidental)
 - c. Should be a combination
 - This is NOT a curriculum development or assessment workshop; rather, it shows how VELS is a guide to be applied for those types of learnings.
 - Curriculum can be viewed as:

What x When x How x Who x For Whom x Where
WHY (VELS is the why!)
 - Future sessions will be held to show how the standards for each domain can be integrated into curriculum, teaching, and assessment.

IX. Next Steps :05

- a. A wall chart showing the “Cliff Notes” of VELS will be printed and distributed.
- b. VELS will appear on-line at www.ahs.state.vt.us/EarlyChildhood
- c. A Parent’s Guide to VELS will be developed.
- d. Future professional development opportunities will use VELS as a framework. Sessions will be offered throughout the state as part of Northern Lights.

X. Questions, Answers, & Suggestions :15

XI. Post-Session Survey (collect) :05
IPDP Documentation Forms Distributed

TOTAL TIME: 2:30

“Not everything that counts can be counted. Not everything that can be counted counts.”
Albert Einstein

DOIN' THE "VELS" LINE DANCE

1. Having early learning standards is a good thing for children.
2. Standards-based curriculum is rigid and lessens opportunities for play.
3. There is strong agreement on what children should know and do when they enter kindergarten.
4. Parents will love VELs.
5. Standards means we are moving toward the standardization of what and how we teach.

Introducing the Vermont Early Learning Standards

Goals for the Session

- Become familiar with VELs, its language, and contents
- Understand how to use VELs when designing curriculum
- Use VELs as a means to select assessment tools & Procedures
- Use VELs to understand children's development and their progress and support sharing developmentally appropriate information with parents

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Using Standards in Early Care and Education

Advantages

- consistency across settings
- developmentally appropriate expectations
- common language
- research-based
- guides curriculum development and choice of assessment instruments/procedures
- provides basis for suggesting referrals
- standards does not mean standardization of early childhood programming
- validates contributions of quality early childhood programs

Considerations

- lose sight of individual child
- "one size fits all" approach to early childhood
- children with special needs held to same expectations
- VELs will become an assessment
- VELs will be a gatekeeper to kindergarten

Should and Shouldn'ts

VELS **SHOULD** be used to:

- Inform families about the development and capabilities of their children who are about to enter kindergarten;
- Help early educators develop curriculum and teaching strategies;
- Guide educators in working with learners from a variety of backgrounds with differing abilities;
- Support referrals of children to qualified specialists when concerns about development become apparent;
- Focus a conversation among families, community members and legislators about the education of young children; and,
- Link the development and learning of young children to the future curriculum goals and learning outcomes of public schools.

OH- 4

VELS SHOULD NOT be used to:

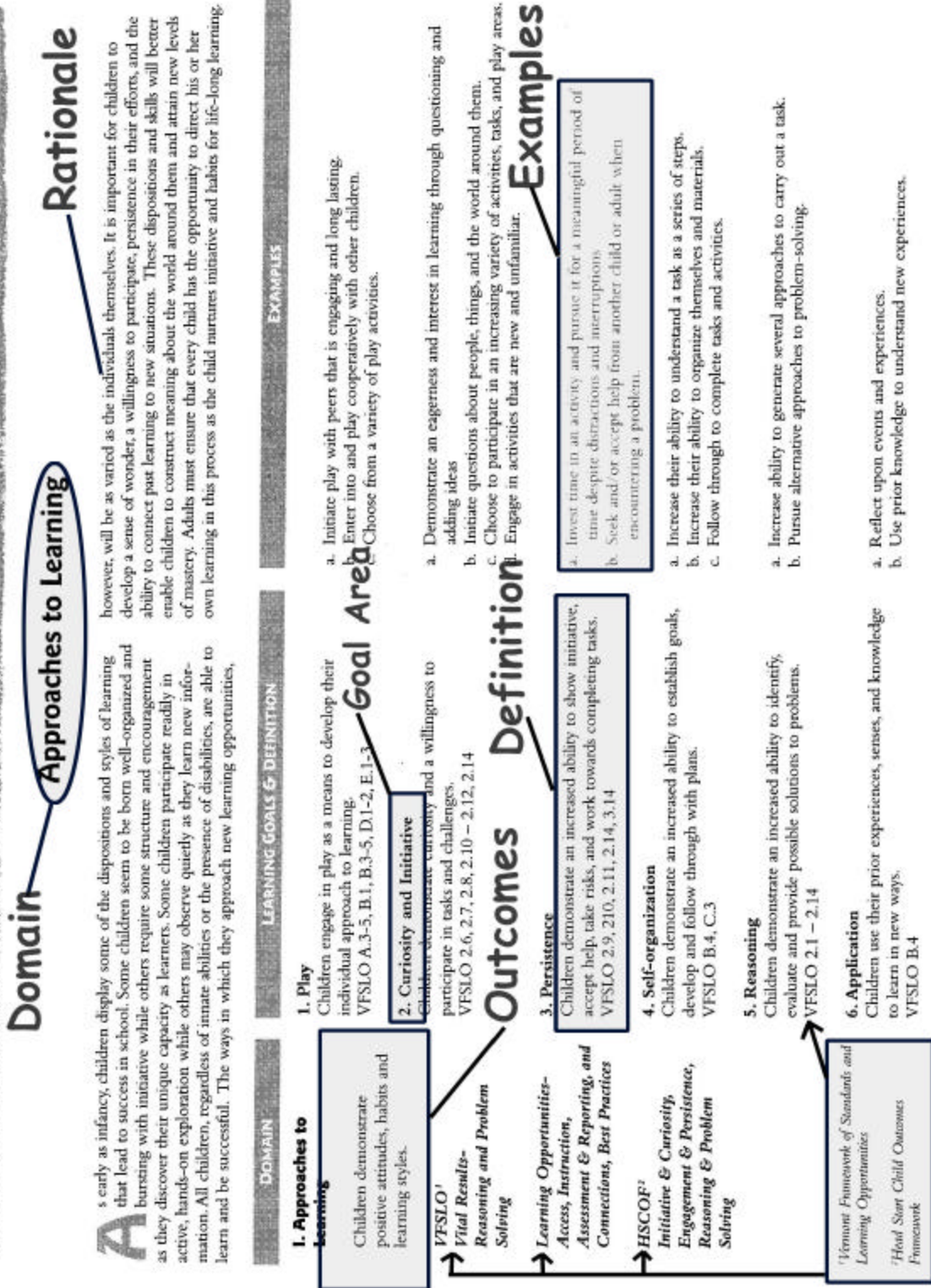
- Assess the competence of young children (VELS is not designed to function as a test);
- Diagnose and “label” children;
- Require specific teaching practices or materials;
- Determine rewards or penalties for educational personnel or programs; or
- Prohibit any child from participating in early childhood programs or entering kindergarten.

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ANATOMY OF VELs

- Domain
- Outcomes
- Goals & Definitions
- Examples (not an exhaustive list!)
- Adults/Environment Support

VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS



Standards-Based or Standards-Linked Curriculum?

Standards-Based = Developing curriculum knowing what you want to the children to gain (intentional/planning).

Standards-Linked = After-the-fact association to see what children have gained (incidental/assessment).

VELS IS **NOT** A CURRICULUM!

Vermont Early Learning Standards Survey

Position: ☐ administrator ☐ professional dev. provider ☐ teacher (Preschool)
 ☐ teacher (Kindergarten) ☐ parent ☐ other (_____)

Setting: ☐ child care ☐ Head Start ☐ public school ☐ support agency
 ☐ health ☐ Other (_____)

Check one: ☐ Beginning of session ☐ End of session

1. How familiar are you with the Vermont Early Learning Standards? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
Very familiar		Rather familiar		Clueless

2. Can you identify the eight domains of knowledge and skills in VELs?

☐ yes ☐ no

3. How much agreement is there among different early childhood professionals (preschool and kindergarten level) as to appropriate expectations for children entering kindergarten? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
Full Agreement		Some Agreement		No Agreement

4. How useful will VELs be in providing greater understanding of child development and consistency of expectations for persons working with young children? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
Very valuable		Rather valuable		Of little value

5. How useful will VELs be in providing parents with greater understanding about appropriate expectations for children entering kindergarten?

1	2	3	4	5
Very valuable		Rather valuable		Of little value

6. How valuable will VELs be in terms of planning curriculum for young children?

1	2	3	4	5
Very valuable		Rather valuable		Of little value

7. How valuable will VELs be for selecting appropriate assessment measures for children's development and progress?

1	2	3	4	5
Very valuable		Rather valuable		Of little value

8. Will VELs benefit young children?

☐ yes ☐ possibly ☐ no ☐ unsure

Comments:

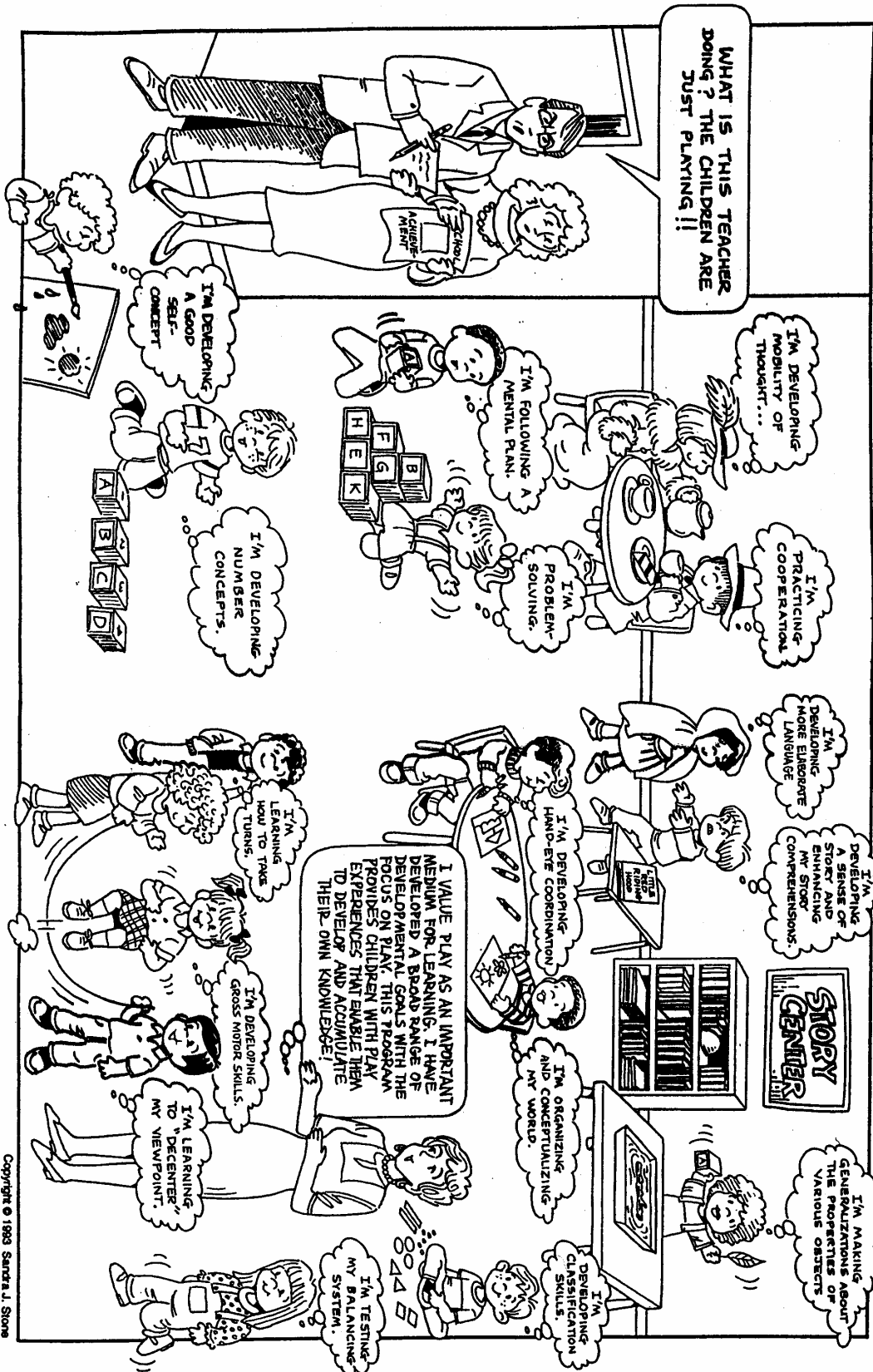
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Introduction to
The Vermont Learning Standards:
Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten

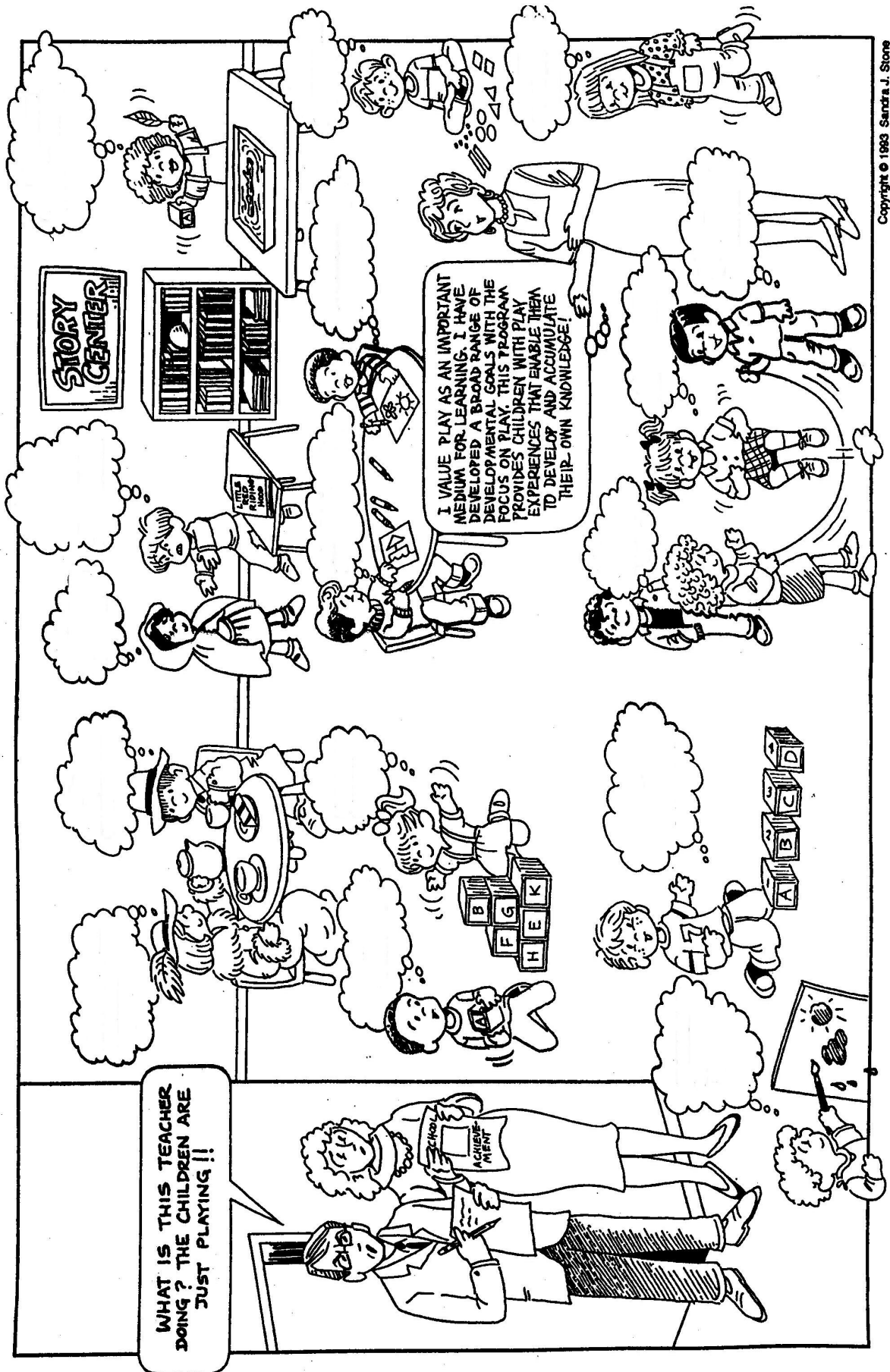
Date & Time
Location
Presenter

- I. Welcome & Introductions**
- II. Testing for Knowledge, Beliefs & Opinions**
- III. Goals for the Session**
- IV. Standards and Early Childhood: A Match Made in**
 - **National**
 - **Vermont**
- V. Advantages and Considerations**
- VI. Understanding VELs**
 - **Guiding Principles**
 - **Nomenclature**
 - **Domains of Development and Learning**
- VII. Understanding and Applying the Standards**
- VIII. Standards-Based or Standards-Linked Curriculum?**
- IX. Q & A, Reflections, Next Steps**
- X. Assessing Our Learning**
- XI. Adjourn**

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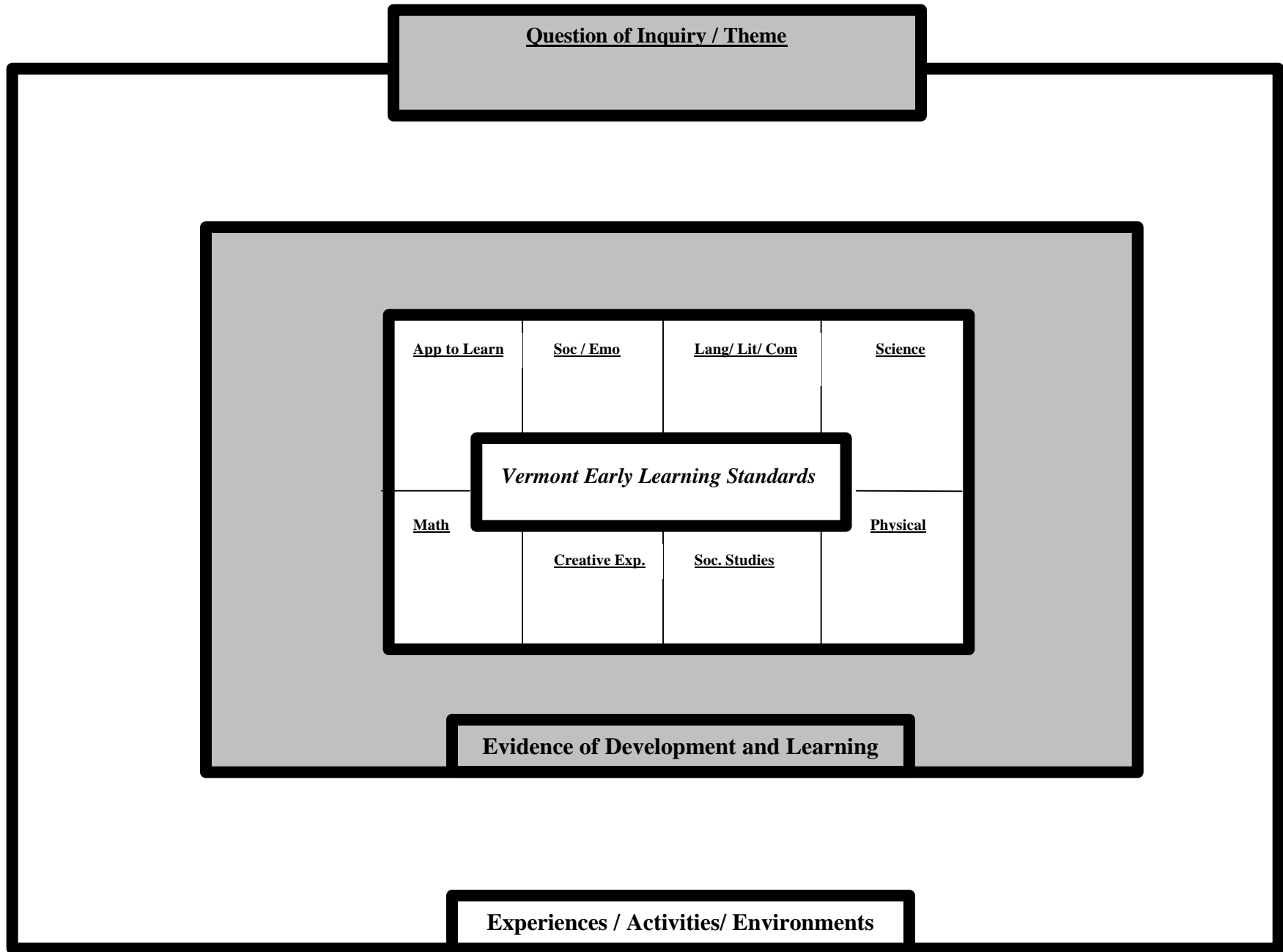
Introducing the Vermont Early Learning Standards

Participant List

Location: _____ Presenter _____ Date _____

Name	Position	Program	E-Mail

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Looking at School Readiness Through Johari's Window

What is appropriate for kindergarten teachers to expect of children entering school to know, do, and how to behave?

TODAY

Kindergarten Teachers

**Preschool
Educators**

	Know	Don't Know
Know		
Don't Know		

TOMORROW

Kindergarten Teachers

Preschool

	Know	Don't Know
Know	VELS	

Parents

Educators

Don't Know		Research
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